

# Tawheed Class #36

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## CLASS THIRTY SIX

We are still on our Usool Ath-Thalaathah book and we are on the chapter where the author mentions fourteen examples of Ibaadaat to support a statement. We have been taking these essential Ibaadaat, we have spent quite a lot of time on them and it is time well worth it. Our topic today is the tenth Ibaadah, which is Isti'aanah (إِستِئْانَة).

### ISTI'AANAH

The author says:

وَدَلِيلُ الْإِسْتِئْانَةِ قَوْلُهُ تَعَالَى : إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ ﴿الْفَاتِحَةُ: ٥﴾  
وَفِي الْحَدِيثِ : إِذَا سَتَعَنْتَ فَاسْتَعِنْ بِاللَّهِ

So he mentions Isti'aanah, then he mentions a proof from the Qur'an and another from the Sunnah.

### ISTI'AANAH IS ON THE PATTERN OF ASTAF'AL

If you look at the first three Arabic letters in Isti'aanah (Alif, Seen and Taa) – words that begin like that indicate seeking or requesting. Wherever you see Alif, Seen and Taa added to the beginning, the word means something about seeking or requesting. They are the words on the pattern of Astaf'al (أَسْتَغْفِرُ).

على وزن أستفعل

That is how we refer to it in Arabic grammar. Some examples are the Ibaadaat of Isti'aanah, Istighaathah (إِسْتِغَاثَة) and Istijaarah (إِسْتِجَارَة). All of them have the meaning of seeking. Furthermore, what is Istighfaar? Istighfaar is seeking forgiveness.

طلب المغفرة

That you are seeking forgiveness.

Istighfaar (إِستِغْفَار) – you see that Alif, Seen and Taa? That is the common thing between all these words.

Outside of Ibaadaat, take the example of Istansar (إِستَنْصَر).

## طلب النصر

Seeking victory. When one seeks victory, it is Istansar.

فَأَصْبَحَ فِي الْمَدِينَةِ خَائِفًا يَتَرَقَّبُ فَإِذَا الَّذِي اسْتَنْصَرَهُ بِالْأَمْسِ  
يَسْتَصْرِخُهُ... ﴿الْقَصص: ١٨﴾

So he became afraid, looking about in the city (waiting as to what will be the result of his crime of killing), when behold, the man who had sought his help the day before, called for his help (again). (Surat al-Qasas: 18)

Some scholars say it is the letters Alif and Seen at the beginning that imply or mean the request. Some of the scholars say it is the Seen by itself. This is a dispute among the scholars of grammar. Some say it is the Seen by itself and like I mentioned, some say it is the Alif, Seen and Taa together. That really does not matter. What matters is when you see words starting like that on the pattern of Astaf'al, it means a request.

Sometimes words on the pattern of Istaf'al can mean the act itself without the request. For example, Allah said:

ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُ كَانَتْ تَأْتِيهِمْ رُسُلُهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَقَالُوا أَبَشِّرْ يَهُدُونَنَا فَكَفَرُوا  
وَتَوَلَّوْا ۚ وَاسْتَغْنَى اللَّهُ... ﴿التَّغَابُن: ٦﴾

That was because there came to them their Messengers with clear proofs (signs), but they said: "Shall mere men guide us?" So they disbelieved and turned away (from the truth), and Allah was not in need (of them). (Surat at-Taghaabun: 6)

وَاسْتَغْنَى اللَّهُ

And Allah was not in need (of them).

Alif, Seen and Taa. It does not mean Allah sought to be rich, Ma'aath Allah. It means Allah is rich, so in some cases it may not mean the request part.

In summary and to avoid confusion, words on the pattern of the Arabic word Astaf'al usually come in the meaning of seeking help for something, seeking something or pursuing something. Sometimes it may come with the act itself, free from the seeking part, like in the verse above.

## THE MEANING OF ISTI'AANAH

Our worship here is Isti'aanah and Isti'aanah comes from:

المعون والمعونة

It comes from assistance.

When you say:

صالح عوني ، عبد الله عوني

It means Saalih or Abdullah assisted me or they are my assistance.

Al-Isti'aanah means to seek and appeal for assistance and it is usually in general matters where no evil has touched you nor do you expect that. Let me repeat – Isti'aanah is to seek and appeal for assistance, and then pay attention to this delicate following sentence because it will help you distinguish between this and the following two worships that we are going to take after this. You will know its value when we take the following two worships because it is a delicate difference. The sentence I want you to keep an eye on is that Isti'aanah is usually in general matters where there is no evil that has touched yet nor do you expect it.

## FORMS OF ISTI'AANAH

Isti'aanah has different forms or types and there are six forms of Isti'aanah.

### THE FIRST FORM

The first form of Isti'aanah is appealing for assistance and aid from Allah with the conditions and pillars. There are four pillars to it. Isti'aanah with complete humility to Allah, Isti'aanah with complete submission to Allah, Isti'aanah with complete Tawakkul on Allah (meaning

reliance on Allah and trusting one's affairs to Allah), and Isti'aanah with complete certainty in Allah (meaning one is certain that Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala is sufficient for him and having confidence in Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala).

This is the type that if you direct it to other than Allah, it is major Shirk. This category and form can only be directed to Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala. This type of Isti'aanah is the meaning of the Hawqalah (حوالة). In Arabic, Hawqalah is the word referring to Laa Hawla Wa Laa Quwwata Illaa Billah (there is no might nor power except in Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala). No one can attain benefits, save himself from harm or be aided in any matter (Deen or Dunya) except through Isti'aanah in Allah. So this category is a definition to the Hawqalah, which is Laa Hawla Wa Laa Quwwata Illaa Billah.

You need Isti'aanah in Allah in everything, whether it may be doing the ordains, leaving the prohibitions or in patience during the trials of this life. You need Isti'aanah not just in this life, but you need Isti'aanah in the life after, in the grave and on the Judgment Day. No one will assist you with anything but Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala. Whoever seeks the assistance of Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala, Allah will aid him. You may now know why we must say:

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ ﴿فَاتِحَةُ: ٥﴾

You (Alone) we worship, and you (Alone) we ask for help (for each and everything). (Surat al-Faatihah: 5)

Seventeen times by Fardh in our Salah. You alone we worship and You alone we appeal for aid.

## THE SECOND FORM

The second form of Isti'aanah is seeking help in a creation in something which he is capable of helping you in. This matter depends on the action that is sought. Is it Halaal or is it Haraam? If someone seeks Isti'aanah in another in a matter that is Halaal, then it is permissible for him to do that and the one who is being asked will get reward for responding and helping. For example, someone is moving and he says brother can you help me in moving my furniture? Or when you came to the Dars today, you ask a brother can we carpool to the Dars?

Allah said:

...وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ... ﴿الْمَائِدَةُ: ٢﴾

Help you one another in Al-Birr and At-Taqwa (virtue, righteousness and piety). (Surat al-Maa'idah: 2)

Seek assistance with one another upon righteous actions.

...وَأَحْسِنُوا ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿البقرة: ١٩٥﴾

And do good. Truly, Allah loves Al-Muhsinoon (the good-doers). (Surat al-Baqarah: 195)

That is if it is Halaal. What about if the matter you seek Isti'aanah in is Haraam? If the matter you are seeking Isti'aanah in is a Haraam issue, then it is forbidden for the one seeking Isti'aanah to ask and it is forbidden for the one who is asked to even help. For example, someone being asked to hand, bring or buy a cup, can or bottle of alcohol. One asking another one to go and co-sign for a Riba contract, witness in it, drive him to that or transport him to any sin. That is Haraam. What is the proof on that? The verse that I just mentioned.

...وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ ۖ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ...

﴿المائدة: ٢﴾

Help you one another in Al-Birr and At-Taqwa (virtue, righteousness and piety); but do not help one another in sin and transgression. (Surat al-Maa'idah: 2)

Do not assist one another in prohibitions, sins and transgression.

### THE THIRD FORM

The third form of Isti'aanah or seeking help is seeking help from a creation who is alive and present, but it is something he cannot do and it is beyond his ability and means. It is something he cannot do and it is beyond his ability and means. That is not Shirk. It is what you would say is useless talk or futile talk, but it is not Shirk. Why is it not Shirk? It is not Shirk for two reasons. Number one – because you are actually speaking to a person. There is a human being there and you are saying hand me this or give me that. He is not able to do it, but you are actually speaking to a person. The second reason is that the matter you are asking him is not among those that are hidden or unseen. That is why it is not Shirk.

An example is if you tell a child, an older person or a paralysed person who cannot carry something heavy to help you carry a big box. That is not Shirk. We mention this because we need to know we cannot go around declaring people Mushrikeen and you would hear this at

times. That is not Shirk, but if the matter you are asking him is something that is hidden or unseen, then that leads us to the next category.

## THE FOURTH FORM

The fourth form is best described as A and B. A is seeking aid in someone that is deceased and B is seeking the aid of someone that is living in matters they cannot do or reach, and those matters are considered among the hidden and unseen. This type of seeking help is major Shirk. Why? Because this can only be done by someone who believes that he sought help from someone who has hidden control over the creation, which only Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala has. Very simple and basic stuff.

## THE FIFTH FORM

The fifth form of Isti'aanah or seeking help is seeking aid from someone who is able to do something with reliance on him. Note here we added the key word reliance on that person. That word can throw you off and that is actually the only difference between this fifth category and the second category. In the second category, we mentioned seeking help in a creation in something which he is capable of helping in and we said that is permissible.

Here if you add the reliance factor, it is like seeking the help of a doctor with reliance on that doctor or seeking Isti'aanah in a lawyer with reliance on him. That is minor Shirk. It becomes major Shirk if there is reliance on the creation in that which they cannot do. One of the ways to check the status of your reliance is by seeing if your heart feels so assured and firm that the person or individual has the full solution – it is in him and it is in his hands and control.

## THE SIXTH FORM

The final form is seeking help in deeds – Isti'aanah in deeds. What we mean is seeking help by performing and turning to Allah in deeds. It is through deeds that are beloved to Allah. For example, seeking help by performing Salah when in need or seeking help by being patient throughout your life, because patience is an Ibaadah in itself when the intention is there. It is seeking help in deeds to attain the help of Allah. The ruling on this category or form is that this is something that is prescribed by Allah. It is permitted and it is recommended by Allah.

Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala said:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ... ﴿البقرة: ١٥٣﴾

O you who believe! Seek help in patience and As-Salat (the prayer). (Surat al-Baqarah: 153)



In 'Uddat As-Saabireen (عدة الصابرين), Ibn al-Qayyim Rahimahullah said Allah directed His servants to turn to Salah and patience for aid in matters of this life and matters of the Hereafter.

Imaam Ahmad and Abu Dawood narrated that Hudhayfah radhiallahu 'anhu said:

كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا حَزَبَهُ أَمْرٌ صَلَّى

Pay attention to that Hadith. In 'Awn Al-Ma'bood (عون المعبود), the author said the key word in the Hadith is:

حَزَبَهُ

It means when he was afflicted with a calamity, a stress, a sorrow, a grief, a worry or a distress. All that falls under this word.

When he sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam was afflicted with that, he would turn to Salah. Try it and you will see relief. Try this abandoned Ibaadah. If you were to analyse the non-obligatory Nafil or Sunnah Salahs, you will see that among the most popular Salah is Istikhaarah. Among the most popular ones is Istikhaarah. It is one of the most that I get questions on and it is one of the most that you hear of people doing. When Muslims have a decision like an engagement, a marriage, a divorce, buying a house, moving or other matters, they hasten to do Salat al-Istikhaarah. It is very widespread and very popular.

A Salah just as important or maybe even more important that you rarely see anyone doing (Illaa Man Rahimallah ((إلا من رحم الله)) is the Salah of one in a difficulty or distress, yet it is needed and essential. Revive that Sunnah and look at what you will get out of it. You will get the reward of reviving the Sunnah of one who is in distress or grief, you will get your normal reward for doing that Salah, and on top of that you will get the enhancement of being relieved from that issue or matter that you are facing.

When a brother or a sister gets an anxiety attack or stress, they are expecting or they are facing a hardship or they anticipate for example bad news at home or at work (may Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala save you from all that), head to those two Rak'ahs. Pray those two Rak'ahs. Ibn Katheer Rahimahullah said Salah is the biggest aider for firmness in all matters. In the first volume of Fath Al-Baari, Ibn Hajr Rahimahullah said it is Sunnah to hasten to Salah if one anticipates that something evil may happen to him. It is Sunnah to head to Salah and hasten to Salah if he anticipates something evil.

Ibn Jareer narrated that Ibn Abbaas radhiyallahu ‘anhuma was walking one day and they told him your brother has just died. They broke the news to him that his brother died, so he said:

إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

Then he immediately stepped to the side of the road that he was on and he began to make Salah. He returned to his camel saying:

وَاسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ... ﴿البقرة: ٤٥﴾

And seek help in patience and As-Salat (the prayer). (Surat al-Baqarah: 45)

In Al-Furoo’ (الفروع) by Ibn Muflih, al-‘Aajuri and others said when one is afflicted, let them turn to Salah. One of the most critical times during the life of the Messenger sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam was in Badr. Look at the critical timing and the critical situation. A defeat in that battle meant the extinction of Islam and he said that in his Du’aa – if You do not give my people victory, You will not be worshipped on this earth. After he sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam aligned the rows for the battle and it was about to begin, the Messenger sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam headed to Salah. Ibn Mas’ood said:

لَمَّا التَقَيْنَا يَوْمَ بَدْرٍ ، قَامَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يُصَلِّي

Then after his Salah, he made Du’aa – the Du’aa that you know where Abu Bakr was holding his upper garment for him.

In another Hadith in Musnad Ahmad, Ali radhiyallahu ‘anhu said there was not a single one of us who did not sleep the night before the Battle of Badr, except the Messenger sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam who was up all night making Salah, crying and pleading with Allah by the tree until the morning broke.

عَنْ عَلِيٍّ ، قَالَ : لَقَدْ رَأَيْتُنَا وَمَا فِيْنَا إِلَّا نَائِمٌ ، إِلَّا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ – صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ – تَحْتَ شَجَرَةٍ يُصَلِّي وَيَبْكِي ، حَتَّى أَصْبَحَ

One thing I wanted to note is that some claim this Salah is a Bid’ah Salah and it is Bid’ah to do it. The reason they say that is because they found a portion of the Hadith on this matter and not the other or when they were asked, they neglected the other part for some reason. There are some weak Hadith on this matter that have a specific Du’aa attached to it. This is

how the weak Hadith goes – if one is in distress, let him make two Rak’aat, and then the weak Hadith says make this specific Du’aa. Those Hadith about the Salah of the one in distress (Salat al-Haajah) with the specific Du’aa attached to them are weak. For example, one of those is:

مَنْ كَانَتْ لَهُ حَاجَةٌ إِلَى اللَّهِ أَوْ إِلَى أَحَدٍ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ ، فَلْيَتَوَضَّأْ وَلْيُصَلِّ  
رَكَعَتَيْنِ ثُمَّ لِيَقُلْ : لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ الْحَلِيمُ الْكَرِيمُ ، سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَرْشِ  
الْعَظِيمِ ، الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ، اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ مُوجِبَاتِ رَحْمَتِكَ

The weak Hadith says whoever has a need or is in distress, let him go make Wudhu, pray two Rak’ahs and say the following:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ الْحَلِيمُ الْكَرِيمُ ، سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ ، الْحَمْدُ  
لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ، اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ مُوجِبَاتِ رَحْمَتِكَ

That is in Ibn Maajah, at-Tirmidhi and al-Haakim and it is very weak. That Hadith that I just mentioned is a very weak Hadith. I mention it because I have seen and read it from some Talabat al-‘Ilm. They saw that this is weak and then they cancelled out the prayer of distress altogether. To be clear – what is weak is the Hadith that is saying if you are afflicted in a matter, go make Wudhu, pray and then make the specific Du’aa. That is the one that is weak and the ones with the specific Du’aa are weak. What is not weak in the Hadith and what is in fact Sunnah as recommended not only by Ahaadith, but by verses in the Qur’an, Ahaadith and statements of the Salaf, is the general Salah of one in distress with no specific Du’aa.

When in distress, when anything bothers you and when you are facing anything in life, head to Salah and make Du’aa. Unlike Salat al-Istikhaarah that has a specific Du’aa attached to it, there is no authentic Du’aa that is attached to the Salah of the one in distress. Just head to Salah and spill your heart out to Allah in any Du’aa that comes to your tongue. Pray, plead, beg and ask Allah. Do Isti’aanah in Allah and you will see the support of Allah to you.

Two verses in the Qur’an support this Ibaadah.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ ... ﴿البقرة: ١٥٣﴾

O you who believe! Seek help in patience and As-Salat (the prayer). (Surat al-Baqarah: 153)

## وَاسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ... ﴿البقرة: ٤٥﴾

And seek help in patience and As-Salat (the prayer). (Surat al-Baqarah: 45)

Twice in Surat al-Baqarah. Seek your aid (Isti'aanah) in your patience and your Salah.

How is Salah a comfort and support? Salah is a connection to Allah. When your connection or bond with Allah is strong, the support of Allah for you will be stronger. And if Allah supports you, all your matters will turn into ease. That is how your Salah is an aid and support to you. It is an Isti'aanah. I do not want to get off topic too much, but these are matters that one needs on a daily basis. This is the rule of life – you are either afflicted or you are waiting for affliction. There is no dodging that rule. If you are not afflicted, do not get happy because affliction is a fact of life and trials are a fact of life.

Like I said, in that specific Salah there is no authentic Hadith with a specific Du'aa attached to it. However, there is a Du'aa that is authentic and has nothing to do with the Salah of the distressed, but it is something you can seek Isti'aanah in as well. In Sahih Muslim, Ibn Abbaas said when the Messenger sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam was afflicted with a matter, he would say a certain Du'aa.

كَانَ إِذَا حَزَبَهُ أَمْرٌ قَالَ : لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ الْعَظِيمُ الْحَلِيمُ ، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ رَبُّ  
الْعَرْشِ الْكَرِيمِ ، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ ، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ رَبُّ  
السَّمَوَاتِ وَرَبُّ الْأَرْضِ وَرَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْكَرِيمِ

He used the same word that I mentioned earlier – Hazabahu (حَزَبَهُ). Hazabahu means a matter afflicted. Like I said, it is sadness, calamity and so on. The first one was on Salah, but this is a Du'aa. When a matter afflicted him, he would say this Du'aa. In Sahih Muslim, the narration that I just mentioned just has that Du'aa. In another authentic narration in Musnad Ahmad, it has this Du'aa that I just mentioned and then it says one should follow it by his own personal Du'aa, meaning you say what I just said and then make your own personal Du'aa. Make that Du'aa like an introduction and then begin with your Du'aa.

Another Du'aa for those in distress is in Sunan at-Tirmidhi and it is authentic.

أَنَّهُ كَانَ إِذَا حَزَبَهُ أَمْرٌ قَالَ : يَا حَيُّ يَا قَيُّوْمُ ، بِرَحْمَتِكَ أَسْتَغِيْثُ

When the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam was faced with anything (and it is the same word as before), he used to say:

يَا حَيُّ يَا قَيُّوْمُ ، بِرَحْمَتِكَ أَسْتَغِيْثُ

Now how does this tie into our class? I do not want you to feel that we went off track because these classes are focused. What we are studying here is Isti’aanah. We said there are forms of Isti’aanah and we mentioned six of them. We said the sixth one is seeking help in deeds. It is Isti’aanah in deeds to get the help of Allah. The two Du’aa I mentioned are seeking Isti’aanah in Du’aa. The Salah of the distressed and Sabr are also examples of that sixth category or form of Isti’aanah.

## THE PROOF OF THE AUTHOR ON ISTI’AANAH

The final point under Isti’aanah is the proof.

وَدَلِيْلُ الْاِسْتِعَاْنَةِ قَوْلُهُ تَعَالٰى : اِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَاِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِيْنُ ﴿الفاتحة: ٥﴾  
وَفِي الْحَدِيْثِ : اِذَا سَتَعَنْتَ فَاسْتَعِنْ بِاللّٰهِ

He mentions an Ayah and a Hadith.

For the Ayah, the author Rahimahullah uses the verse in Surat al-Faatihah:

اِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَاِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِيْنُ ﴿الفاتحة: ٥﴾

You (Alone) we worship, and you (Alone) we ask for help (for each and everything). (Surat al-Faatihah: 5)

For the Hadith, he mentions the saying of the Prophet Muhammad sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam:

اِذَا سَتَعَنْتَ فَاسْتَعِنْ بِاللّٰهِ

If you seek help, then seek help of Allah alone and only Allah.

## THE AYAH

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ ﴿الْفَاتِحَةُ: ٥﴾

You (Alone) we worship, and you (Alone) we ask for help (for each and everything). (Surat al-Faatihah: 5)

As with some previous proofs we took, there is something switched around here. This should have been:

نَعْبُدُكَ وَنَسْتَعِينُكَ

Instead of:

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ

But why is it the second one? There is a very big lesson in that. He mentions the word upon which the verb acts before the verb itself. He said:

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ

Instead of:

نَعْبُدُكَ

The rule is:

أريد الحصر والقصر فقدم ما حقه التأخير

According to the principles of Arabic grammar, bringing forward that which usually comes afterwards indicates restriction and particularisation.

تقديم ما حقه التأخير يفيد الحصر والقصر

I believe we went over it twice, but it is okay to keep going over it so it will stick and be embedded in our minds. The words were switched around to stress and emphasise that directing Ibaadah or Isti'aanah is only for Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala, and it is Shirk to give it to other than Allah. It only belongs to Allah and it is to stress that fact.

Let me give you an example outside the verses of the Qur'an and maybe that will help you understand. In Arabic, you say:

ضربت زيدا

I hit Zayd. First you say I hit and then you say the name. I hit Muhammad or I hit Saalih.

However, you can flip them around. You can flip it around to say:

زيدا ضربت

The first way is more common. When you flip them around and that is not common, it means you are trying to stress the fact that the only one you hit was Zayd, Saalih or whoever you mention.

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ

Is not:

نَعْبُدُكَ وَنَسْتَعِينُكَ

Because this is a dangerous matter of Shirk. It is to stress that you only worship Allah. You only give Allah your Isti'aanah and your Ibaadah. You only seek your aid from Allah. It is switched around to restrict, particularise and emphasise Ibaadah and Isti'aanah to Allah alone.

Ibn Abbaas said Iyyaaka Na'bud (إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ) means You alone Allah we worship, You alone

Allah we fear and we have hope in no one other than You. Just as Iyyaaka Na'bud appears to declare that we worship Allah alone, it also declares that we renounce Shirk. Just as it declares that we worship Allah alone, it declares that we renounce Shirk because Tawheed is Ithbaat and Nafi.

إِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ

With that we declare that no one has the right and power to assist us but Allah. You alone we seek and appeal for assistance. Yaa Allah, You alone we seek and appeal for assistance.

Why did He say:

## إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ

You alone we worship and You alone we appeal for aid. Why was it not flipped around to say You alone we appeal for aid and You alone we worship? He mentioned Na'bud (نَعْبُدُ) before Nasta'een (نَسْتَعِينُ) and the 'Ulamaa said it is because Ibaadah is more important.

We said Isti'aanah is a worship. Our talk today is about a worship – the Ibaadah of Isti'aanah. As I said in every one of the last few classes, we are going over the fourteen matters of Ibaadah (worship) that the author chose as examples and Isti'aanah is one. It is called and considered a worship, so why does the verse say we worship You only and we seek your aid only Yaa Allah? Had it been we worship You period, would that not also include the following worship which is Isti'aanah? Would that not be included as an Ibaadah? Isti'aanah is included in the Ibaadah. Appealing for His aid (Isti'aanah) is part of Ibaadah and it is part of Iyyaaka Na'bud.

Why did He mention it separately if it is already included in the first part? There are three reasons some 'Ulamaa mentioned. The first reason is what you call mentioning the broad matter (which is Iyyaaka Na'bud), then emphasising a special, important or essential matter (which is Iyyaaka Nasta'een). You will get that better if I tell you another verse.

## حَافِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ وَالصَّلَاةِ الْوُسْطَى... ﴿البقرة: ٢٣٨﴾

Guard strictly (five obligatory) As-Salawaat (the prayers) especially the middle Salat (i.e. the best prayer – 'Asr). (Surat al-Baqarah: 238)

He said guard your prayers and the middle prayer. Had He said guard your prayers period, would that not include the middle prayer? Of course it is included. The reason He specified the middle prayer even though it is included in the prayers is to emphasise the special or important Salah, which is the middle Salah.

Another example. A mother has four children and she sends them off with a babysitter, relative or friend to the park or somewhere, or they go sleep the night over at the house of her sister. One of them may be an infant or sick for example, so she is going to say take care of my kids and then she is going to say take care of Muhammad or be careful with Muhammad. Is Muhammad not part of her kids? Is Muhammad not included when she said take care of my kids? Of course he is, but what she means is pay extra special attention to Muhammad. Muhammad is important or there is something about Muhammad that you need to take care of.



Another reason some 'Ulamaa gave for mentioning both even though Isti'aanah is included as an Ibaadah is because the first one (Ibaadah) is purely a right of Allah. It is a right of Allah purely, whereas Isti'aanah is a right of Allah purely, but it relates to the servant in that he is also asking aid for himself from Allah. That is another reason.

A third reason some 'Ulamaa mentioned is even though Isti'aanah is included in Ibaadah, it is still mentioned because you need Isti'aanah in every aspect of your Ibaadah. You affirmed Iyyaaka Na'bud because you could never ever do Ibaadah without Isti'aanah (without Allah aiding you). If Allah does not give you 'Awn (عون) (Isti'aanah that you seek), can you do Ibaadah? You cannot, so it was mentioned after that because it is essential in you making your Ibaadah. That is the verse the author used.

## THE HADITH

He also used a Hadith as proof. The portion of the Hadith that he used is:

إِذَا سَتَعَنْتَ فَاسْتَعِنْ بِاللَّهِ

This is part of a much longer Hadith where Ibn Abbaas radhiyallahu 'anhuma was riding with the Messenger sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam, and the Messenger sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam began to teach him as a young little boy. The Messenger sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam took the opportunity to teach him while Ibn Abbaas was riding with him.

In the Hadith, he told him:

يَا غُلَامُ ، إِنِّي أُعَلِّمُكَ كَلِمَاتٍ : احْفَظِ اللَّهَ يَحْفَظْكَ ، احْفَظِ اللَّهَ تَجِدْهُ تُجَاهَكَ ، إِذَا سَأَلْتَ فَاسْأَلِ اللَّهَ ، وَإِذَا اسْتَعَنْتَ فَاسْتَعِنْ بِاللَّهِ ، وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ الْأُمَّةَ لَوِ اجْتَمَعَتْ عَلَى أَنْ يَنْفَعُوكَ بِشَيْءٍ ، لَمْ يَنْفَعُوكَ إِلَّا بِشَيْءٍ قَدْ كَتَبَهُ اللَّهُ لَكَ ، وَإِنْ اجْتَمَعُوا عَلَى أَنْ يَضُرُّوكَ بِشَيْءٍ ، لَمْ يَضُرُّوكَ إِلَّا بِشَيْءٍ قَدْ كَتَبَهُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ ، رُفِعَتِ الْأَقْلَامُ وَجَفَّتِ الصُّحُفُ

This is actually one of my favourite Ahaadith. I cannot see how anyone can go on his day to day life or his lifetime without at least keeping the meaning of it between his eyes. Without any exaggeration, one can literally write several volumes on its explanation or give a series

of lectures on it. It is a Hadith that establishes Tawakkul and Isti'aanah and it puts one at ease and peace of mind.

The author chose the statement that pertains to our issue here. Out of that Hadith, he chose:

إِذَا سَتَعْتَفَاسْتَعِنْ بِاللّٰهِ

If you seek aid and assistance, seek it from Allah alone.

We are poor to Allah and we are weak to Allah. Therefore, we are always in need of the aid and support of Allah. The Hadith says turn to Allah in Isti'aanah. When you are faced with anything – genuinely, truthfully and wholeheartedly turn to Allah in Isti'aanah, and you will see that Allah is:

نِعْمَ الْمَوْلٰى وَنِعْمَ النَّصِيْرُ

## INSPIRATIONAL CONCLUSION ON ISTI'AANAH

...فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ مَوْلَاكُمْ ۖ نِعْمَ الْمَوْلٰى وَنِعْمَ النَّصِيْرُ ﴿الأنفال: ٤٠﴾

Then know that Allah is your Mawlaa (Patron, Lord, Protector and Supporter, etc), (what) an Excellent Mawlaa, and (what) an Excellent Helper! (Surat al-Anfaal: 40)

He will be your Protector and He will be your Supporter, and what an excellent Protector, Supporter and Helper He is.

Turn to Allah sincerely in your matters – from the beginning of your matters to the end. From the start of your matters to the end. What I mean by that is do not go seeking every single means and remedy and then when you hit a dead end, you go turn to Allah. Allah will accept you of course, but make it a habit to turn to Allah from the start of your matters and from the start of your life, meaning you teach your kids. Make Isti'aanah in Allah the first of your choices and you will see Wallahi, Allah will not let you down. He will make you happy and content. He would not let you down in a matter you do Isti'aanah in Him in, even if the universe with its might and everything in it collaborated against you.

That is only when you do the proper Isti'aanah in Him, having the pure Tawheed in your Isti'aanah. That is why we learned Isti'aanah and that is why we learned the conditions of Isti'aanah. In order to get the aid of Allah, you have to fulfill the conditions like we mentioned. Amongst them is submission, Tawakkul and certainty. Have certainty in Allah

while you do your Isti'aanah in Him. Did we not say some of the worships of the heart are intertwined with each other like Ibn al-Qayyim Rahimahullah said? Work on perfecting the conditions of your Isti'aanah. That is what we want to achieve.

If you knew a wealthy and powerful king somewhere and he promised to protect you or you knew some billionaire who was generous to you, would you ever be scared over your security, your salary or your job? Anything you want – you just go and he will fund you.

...وَلِلَّهِ الْمَثَلُ الْأَعْلَى... ﴿النحل: ٦٠﴾

And for Allah is the highest description. (Surat an-Nahl: 60)

It is the King of all Kings and it is the One who owns the treasures of the heavens and the earth. When you say:

أَسْتَعِثُّ بِاللَّهِ

Do not say it on the tip of your tongue as something just coming out of your tongue. Say it wholeheartedly, believe in it with full confidence in the One who you are seeking aid from and you will see the results. If Allah aids you, rest assured you have been truly aided. And if He forsakes you, who is there after Him that can aid you and support you? If Allah does not support you, who other than Allah can support you?

Isti'aanah returns upon you in this life with an honourable life. If you have Isti'aanah, you will have an honourable and noble life, and then the high ranks of Jannah in the Aakhirah – the ultimate goal. That is the fruit of Tawheed. You need to feel it in this life before the Aakhirah. Throughout your affairs and throughout your life, keep your unwavering Isti'aanah in Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala.

Sometimes the wisdom may be that Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala delays His aid and support to you, and it is not that Allah forgot. Never ever think of that, Ma'aath Allah. You have to keep that in mind. When one is in the agony of being oppressed, the oppressor goes to sleep comfortably. The one who is being oppressed does not sleep the nights, whether it may be little matters or big matters. The nights seem endless and darker than ever. The Du'aa is constant and then one may think why did Allah not answer me? That is why Allah says:

وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ اللَّهَ غَافِلًا عَمَّا يَعْمَلُ الظَّالِمُونَ... ﴿ابراهيم: ٤٢﴾

Consider not that Allah is unaware of that which the Dhaalimoon (polytheists, wrong doers, etc) do. (Surat Ibraheem: 42)

Allah did not forget about them. That is what He is trying to tell you. Allah did not forget about those. The delay may be to make you despair in all means and all creations and turn to Allah alone, and at that same time to show you that all and everyone turned away from you. It may be to show you that no one was able to help you but Allah Jalla Fee 'Ulaah. Sometimes the wisdom in delaying the help of Allah to you when you do Isti'aanah in Him may be to test your Isti'aanah. Do you really have certainty in Allah in your Isti'aanah? Allah wants to test you. Do you have the conditions we mentioned fulfilled? He wants to test your certainty in Isti'aanah.

Take this example. If a little ant crawled over here on this desk, it was able to speak to one of us and it sought Isti'aanah in me or you. The ant told you there are a hundred ants coming after me at a distance. They are chasing me and they are after me, there is a tribe of them and they are going to kill me. You want to test the Isti'aanah of that ant in you – is her Isti'aanah faithful or not? Do you just go run and crush those one hundred ants and put an end to them? What you do is let them get closer and closer and closer. Not only do you test her Isti'aanah, but you also want to show the ant your power and your mercy. Getting rid of those ants is no obstacle to you. You can do it by stepping on them when they are far away or when they get closer. It takes a millisecond to do it, but if those ants got real close right in front of that ant that sought help in you and then you stepped on them, killed them and eliminated them, it reflects on that one ant. You showed that ant your ability, you showed that ant your power, you showed that ant how merciful you were with her and you showed her how you fulfilled your promise.

...وَلِلَّهِ الْمَثَلُ الْأَعْلَى... ﴿النحل: ٦٠﴾

And for Allah is the highest description. (Surat an-Nahl: 60)

Allah has the supreme examples. Allah tests you to relieve you. Allah tests you to be merciful and compassionate over you. He lets matters get closer and closer and closer to you, and just when you think your Isti'aanah failed and the matter would never be relieved, He Jalla Fee 'Ulaah relieves you and aids you.

It happened to the Messengers when they sought help from Allah. Look at the last verse in Surat Yusuf. What does it say? The Messengers sought Isti'aanah in Allah.

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا اسْتَيْأَسَ الرُّسُلُ وَظَنُّوا أَنَّهُمْ قَدْ كُذِّبُوا جَاءَهُمْ نَصْرُنَا فَنُجِّيَ مَنْ نَشَاءُ ۖ وَلَا يُرَدُّ بَأْسُنَا عَنِ الْقَوْمِ الْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴿يوسف: ١١٠﴾

(They were reprieved) until, when the Messengers gave up hope and thought that they were denied (by their people), then came to them Our Help, and whomsoever We willed

were delivered. And Our Punishment cannot be warded off from the people who are Mujrimoon (criminals, disobedient to Allah, sinners, disbelievers, polytheists). (Surat Yusuf: 110)

They were reprieved until when? Until when the Messengers gave up hope. They gave up hope and then they thought they were denied. Actually some scholars say that they were sure they were denied and it was the end. They hit the dead end. What happened then? Then comes to them Our help. The help, aid and support for those Messengers who sought Isti'aanah came when? Pay attention to those details when you read the Qur'an. It came when they gave up hope and they thought they were denied. Who was it who were denied until the last moments? Me and you? It was the Messengers of Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala – the best of all creations.

His beloved Messenger Ibraheem 'alayhis-salaam – the Khaleel of Allah and one of the special five Messengers. Could Allah not have saved Khaleelullah as soon as they began to light the matches to burn him or even before that? They turned on the fire and He let it get closer. They come closer to Ibraheem 'alayhis-salaam and He let them get closer. They shackled Khaleelullah and He let them restrain him. The Isti'aanah, Imaan and Tawakkul of Ibraheem 'alayhis-salaam is unwavering. They put him in a cannon to shoot him over and He let them get closer. His Isti'aanah was firm throughout all that. Could Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala not have saved him before any one of those steps? What about right before they shot him to the fire? Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala let Khaleelullah 'alayhis-salaatu was-salaam go all the way to land inside the fire.

He tests and He delays His help and support (His 'Awn) to you to show you His power, to show you His mercy and to show you His love. When He relieves you, you are going to be happier and more well-off than you were before if you had the true Isti'aanah. He tests you and lets it get closer because He wants you to be unwavering in your Yaqeen in expecting the aid of Allah.

You know the story of Surat al-Kahf when the young men sought Isti'aanah in Allah and Allah directed them to a cave. Let me ask you a question – do you ever hide in an open room? What is the first thing you do when you hide? You close the door and you put a chair, a dresser or something behind the door. Is sleeping something that coincides with people hiding? And all of them are sleeping? The first thing people hiding do or say is be on alert. Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala wanted to show that they sought My aid, therefore they will be protected. To make the miracle of protecting them bigger and to show them His power subhaanahu wa ta'aala, they will be protected while sleeping in open quarters. Note that word – sleeping and in open quarters. Leave the means to Allah when you seek Isti'aanah in Him. That is not our business.

To show how enormous, significant and powerful this Ibaadah is, let me say this and I will conclude with this so we can make our Salah. Fir'awn – the superpower of his time and the man who claimed to be the supreme lord.

فَقَالَ أَنَا رَبُّكُمُ الْأَعْلَى ﴿النَّازِعَات: ٢٤﴾

Saying: "I am your lord, most high." (Surat an-Naazi'aat: 24)

Not just a lord, but the supreme lord. The tyrant of all tyrants, the man with the mightiest army of his time and with lofty pillars that Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala said the like of which were not produced in all of the land.

الَّتِي لَمْ يُخْلَقْ مِثْلُهَا فِي الْبِلَادِ ﴿الْفَجْرِ: ٨﴾

The like of which were not created in the land? (Surat al-Fajr: 8)

He threatened to annihilate and extinct Musa and everyone who followed Musa.

وَقَالَ الْمَلَأُ مِنْ قَوْمِ فِرْعَوْنَ أَتَذَرُ مُوسَى وَقَوْمَهُ لِيُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَيَذَرَكَ  
وَالِهَتَكَ ۚ قَالَ سَنُقَتِّلُ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ وَنَسْتَحْيِي نِسَاءَهُمْ وَإِنَّا فَوْقَهُمْ قَاهِرُونَ  
﴿الْأَعْرَاف: ١٢٧﴾

The chiefs of Fir'awn's people said: "Will you leave Musa and his people to spread mischief in the land, and to abandon you and your gods?" He said: "We will kill their sons, and let live their women, and we have indeed irresistible power over them." (Surat al-A'raaf: 127)

The chiefs and leaders of the people of Fir'awn went to him. These are the evil mischief people. They said to Fir'awn are you going to go leave Musa and his people to spread mischief in the land? Notice how the mischief people call the righteous mischief people. These are instigators and troublemakers who kiss up to the tyrants – people who kiss up to the tyrants to get a smile, a pat on the back or to be safe from their evil. They go up to Fir'awn and look how evil they are. Those who kiss up to the tyrants made Fir'awn look like an angel. They are the ones suggesting and they made Fir'awn look like he is an innocent man who said oh okay, we will kill their children and enslave their women, and we are indeed irresistible over them.

سَنُقَتِّلُ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ وَنَسْتَحْيِي نِسَاءَهُمْ وَإِنَّا فَوْقَهُمْ قَاهِرُونَ

“We will kill their sons, and let live their women, and we have indeed irresistible power over them.”

Look at that threat and that is the point of our verse here. Look at that threat. You know who it is from and to who it is directed. You know how powerful Fir’awn is and how weak Musa ‘alayhis-salaatu was-salaam appeared to be. Okay Musa, what is going to happen now? What is the solution? Musa ‘alayhis-salaatu was-salaam gets these threats, now give us a solution. Being weak, his solution is our Ibaadah today. His solution was that.

قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِ اسْتَعِينُوا بِاللَّهِ وَاصْبِرُوا ۚ إِنَّ الْأَرْضَ لِلَّهِ يُورِثُهَا مَنْ يَشَاءُ  
مِنْ عِبَادِهِ ۚ وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١٢٨﴾

Musa said to his people: “Seek help in Allah and be patient. Verily, the earth is Allah’s. He gives it as a heritage to whom He will of His slaves, and the (blessed) end is for the Muttaqoon.” (Surat al-A’raaf: 128)

Musa said to his people seek help in Allah. Isti’aanah in Allah – our topic today.

Now you know why Isti’aanah is part of al-Faatihah and why we must read it seventeen times a day by Fardh.